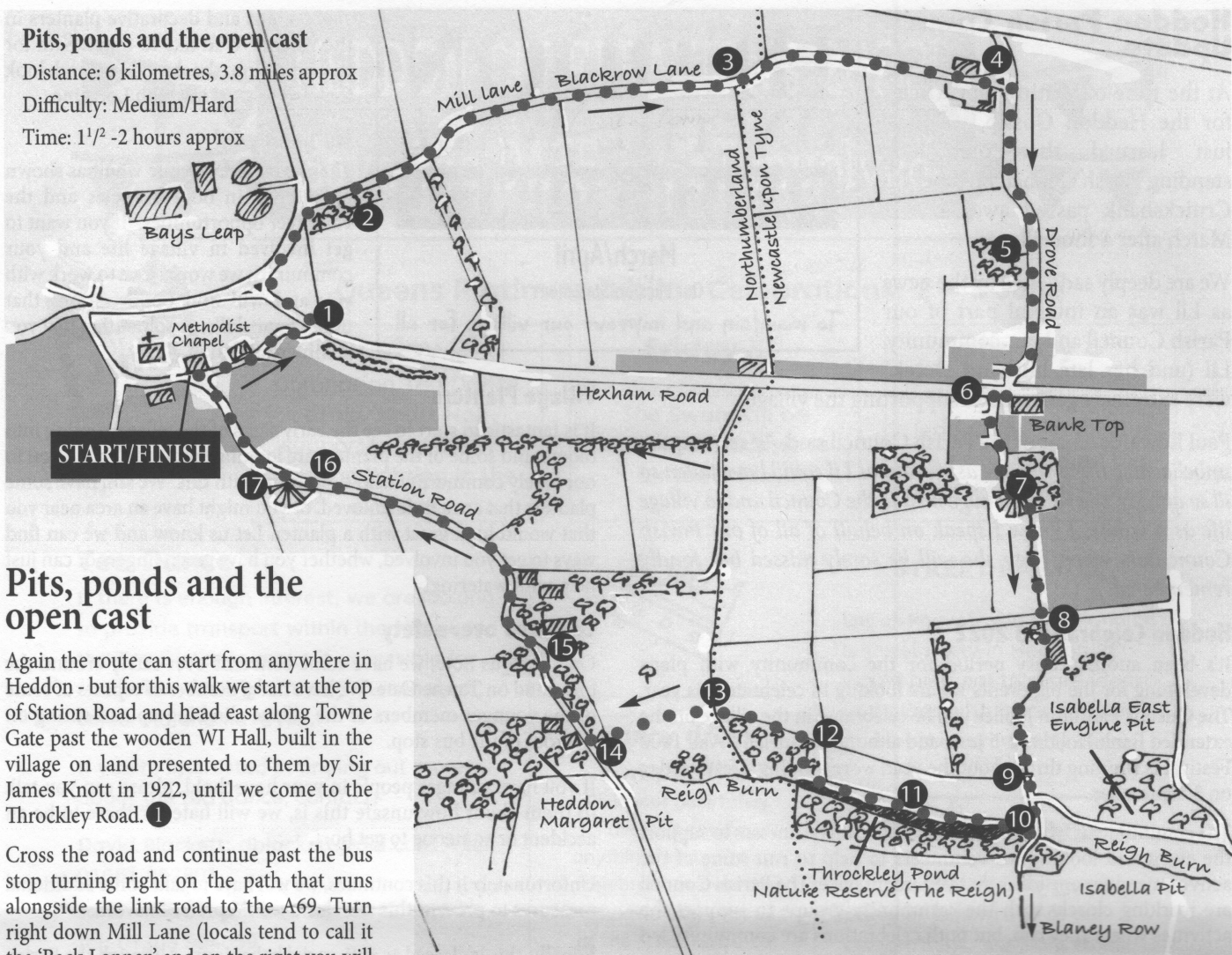


Pits, ponds and the open cast

Distance: 6 kilometres, 3.8 miles approx

Difficulty: Medium/Hard

Time: 1½ - 2 hours approx



Pits, ponds and the open cast

Again the route can start from anywhere in Heddon - but for this walk we start at the top of Station Road and head east along Towne Gate past the wooden WI Hall, built in the village on land presented to them by Sir James Knott in 1922, until we come to the Throckley Road. **1**

Cross the road and continue past the bus stop turning right on the path that runs alongside the link road to the A69. Turn right down Mill Lane (locals tend to call it the 'Back Lonnen' and on the right you will notice a big rock **2** which when I was young was told it was called Huntsman's Leap - don't know if there is any truth in the story associating with it. The landscape is quite boring along the lane with few trees, after being landscaped when the open cast coal mining ended in the sixties.

The Mill Lane changes into Blackrow Lane half way down, cross the County Boundary into Newcastle-upon-Tyne **3** just before Black Row Farm. **4**

Turn right up Drove Road heading towards Bank Top. As the road rises up to Bank Top there in the stand of trees on the right hand side is a old wooden building and a tennis court. **5**

When reaching Bank Top and the main Throckley Road, cross the road and head south down Hill House Road. **6** Reaching end of the road follow the waymarker between the stone posts and take the path through the trees which opens up to superb views across the valley. **7**

Follow the path down the steps **8** passing the converted farmstead noticing the bricks from the local old brickworks underfoot. Continue down the footpath and steps until the path opens out onto a gravel road, **9** ignoring the path signposted towards Station Road. Head a little further down until you reach the wood and Reigh



Throckley Pond (The Reigh)

Burn with the notice board on the right. **10**

Turn right past the notice board and along the side of Throckley Pond also known as the 'Reigh'. The pond was used as a water supply for Isabella Pit and the water feeding it and the Reigh Burn comes from old mine workings of the Heddon Margaret Pit situated in the wood near the bottom of Station Road. Throckley Pond is now a Nature Reserve. **11**

Walking along the side of the 'Reigh', you might be lucky to see Kingfishers along with Mallard ducks and swans. The water contains a great variety of coarse fish. Follow the path as it turns uphill until it meets the path **12** from the bottom of the 'steps'. Turn left and take the path through the boundary kissing gate **13** to enter Northumberland and the Parish of Heddon-on-the-Wall. Cross the field keeping to the path and observing the Countryside Code go through the kissing gate **14** at the other end of the path and onto Station Road. Now the hard graft starts as you steeply climb Station Road taking in a breather as you pass Heddon Hall **15** in the trees. The Hall was built in the 18th century

and now is a Grade II Listed Building protected by law. Station road snakes around Heddon Hall before it rises steeply again for a short stretch then levels into a steady climb passing the old coal depot on the rough ground to the right. 16

As the road gently curves into Heddon take in the view behind you and across the valley 17 before you enter Heddon and finishing your walk at the top of Station Road outside the Methodist Chapel



Looking east from the top of Station Road. On the left of the photograph is the site of the old coal depot